



November 18, 2022

Honorable Jon J. Jensen
Chief Justice
North Dakota Supreme Court
600 E. Boulevard Ave.
Bismarck, ND 58505-0530

HAND DELIVERED

Dear Chief Justice Jensen:


On November 17, 2022, Justice Gerald W. VandeWalle delivered notice of his intent to retire effective January 31, 2023.

Justice VandeWalle's retirement will create a vacancy on the North Dakota Supreme Court. Please consider this a notice of a vacancy.

Justice VandeWalle has served the State of North Dakota with great honor, distinction and dedication for 64 years, beginning with his appointment as a special assistant attorney general in 1958. He was appointed to the state's highest court in 1978 and is the longest serving Supreme Court justice in North Dakota history. For 44 years he served the Supreme Court with fairness, compassion and commitment to equal justice, including a distinguished 27-year tenure as chief justice from 1993 to 2019, which made him the longest serving chief justice in North Dakota history and the longest serving chief justice in the nation when he passed the gavel. Justice VandeWalle's illustrious career has been acknowledged by his peers in North Dakota's legal community as well as his colleagues across the country. In 2015, he became the 42nd recipient of the North Dakota Theodore Roosevelt Rough Rider Award, the state's highest citizen honor. Despite these accolades and his exceptional career, this humble native of Noonan has always remained modest and accessible to his fellow North Dakotans, insisting on simply being called "Jerry" even as many continue to refer to him respectfully as "Chief." A towering figure in the legal community and beloved fixture in the halls of the Capitol, he leaves a remarkable legacy of service to which all North Dakotans can aspire.

As we look forward to working with you to appoint his successor, we do so with the greatest appreciation and deepest gratitude for Justice VandeWalle's exemplary and unparalleled service to the State of North Dakota.

With gratitude,


Doug Burgum
Governor